

SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, June 19, 2018, 5:30 p.m, Old Schoolhouse Common

Present: Selectboard members Richard Baker, Laurie Colgan and Christopher Martin; Town Clerk Bobbi Brimblecombe; Visitors Jon Groveman, Nancy Davila-Groveman, James Arisman, Mike Farrell, Greg Western (Cross Vermont Trail), Tim Booth, Steve Fiske, Mark Bisson, Judd Levine, Andy Fischbeck, Paul Bishop, Cathy Chodorkoff, Drew McNaughton, Rich Phillips, Sonia Carrasco, Jacob Gouge, Margaret Campbell, John Medose, Betty Larsen, Bob Buchanan, Deanna Willey, Olivia Boucher

At 5:30 p.m. the meeting was called to order by Chair Chris Martin

Changes or additions to the agenda: Trees, ambulance contract, promissory note for loader

Public Comment: none

Review and Approval of Minutes: The Board approved the minutes of June 5 and 7

Route 2 Maple Operation: Jon Groveman explained his background at ANR. He has concerns about the project and other people share his concerns. He feels that this is a large project for a small town. Part of the project is in an area that is special to many people; there is a lot of recreation in that area. It has been a peaceful natural recreation area. Logging in the past has not interfered with that. The project has radically changed the character of the area.

He feels that the town has some authority because they are using the town's right of way. The railroad bed and roads were in tough shape in the spring. He appreciates Mike Farrell's response but he feels that it should have been brought before the town in the beginning. Not doing that has left people wondering about the scope of the project. The best projects happen when people come to the town and talk to people first. He wrote the letter to get the conversation going and we need to have a relationship with the people who are operating it. He wants to know if Mr. Farrell is willing to come to a special meeting and explain the project, the permitting, and the feedback that he has received from ANR.

Rich Baker explained that agricultural projects are exempt from local review and the project did not require local permits. Sugaring is included in the definition of farming (no matter the size). Forestry also does not require local review.

Chris explained that we are not holding a hearing, but he would like to hear from Mr. Farrell. Mr. Farrell explained that they did not expect the project to become so large, but the 2,200 acres came up for sale after the project was started. He never thought there would be much interest in the project. He wants to have a positive relationship with the residents and he wants to encourage people to continue to use the property. They plan to have a conservation easement to protect the land for recreation. Tubing is the reality of modern sugaring. They are trying to run a good, well-

thought out operation that is a benefit to the community. He is happy to have another forum at a later date to discuss more of the details.

Jon is in favor of working lands and would love to see the plans for trails, and would love for the community to be involved.

Judd Levine's concern is that there are many questions that haven't been answered and a small community is not used to such a large project. He is curious about the future scope of the project because the magnitude is not what we are used to.

Mike has talked to Susan Green about doing a library program and he would like to do a meeting at the sugarhouse to show people the operation. Jon would like to see any plans and interactions they have had with regulatory agencies.

Bob Buchanan thinks there is significantly more opposition to the project than is obvious here today. He doesn't feel that this is agriculture. He wants time for people to get their questions together.

Andy Fischbeck goes back onto Hardwood Mountain all the time. There is flagging from Kettle Pond to Hardwood Mountain and if that is for sugaring, it is huge.

Jacob Gouge has benefitted from doing work on the project and he is happy to see money coming into Marshfield but he has seen the changes on Depot Hill. He thinks this is a construction project right now but it won't always be like this when the construction is finished. He sees this as an asset to the town and more people will need to be hired and he is happy to have a local job.

Tim Booth appreciates the project and he appreciates having jobs in Vermont. He doesn't think people have the right to tell you what to do with your property. Maybe Groveman should buy the property because nothing happened in this town unless Groveman approves. Tim Booth left the meeting at that point.

Rich Baker questioned whether the Selectboard should facilitate a meeting or whether it should be the conservation commission or some other entity. Drew McNaughton feels that the process should be collaborative. John Medose stated that people just want to know what is going on because no one has talked to us about it. Judd Levine stated that no one wants to shut the project down, they just want to know what is happening.

Rich Baker said he doesn't think the meeting needs to be at a Selectboard meeting because we don't have jurisdiction. Jon stated that they are asking for the Selectboard's help. Chris stated that the property owners could post the property. Jon feels that the Board is supposed to represent the people. Rich agreed that the Board can facilitate but it should not be a Selectboard meeting because the Board members should be able to participate as residents.

Bobbi and Chris explained that the railroad bed is private property, and the status will be clarified in the future. Chris noted that they could post their entire property. Mike Farrell

indicated that they have no plans to do that.

Jon Groveman and Mike Farrell agreed to get together to arrange an informational meeting.

At this point, all visitors left the meeting except Rich Phillips, Steve Fiske (Conservation Commission), Paul Bishop, and Cathy Chodorkoff.

Martin Covered Bridge: Rich Phillips explained that the haying has been extending up the knoll but that was never anticipated in the management plan. He feels that we need to maintain the habitat on the knoll. He doesn't think it should be hayed. It should only be brushhogged once every few years. He asked the Selectboard to talk to Tim Maclay about it. Steve Fiske thought the mowing was supposed to be done at a later date to protect nesting birds. Rich Baker suggested that Rich should draft a letter with the Conservation Commission, and bring it to the Board for approval. Chris asked whether the Selectboard should ask Tim Maclay to do the occasional brushhogging in return for being allowed to cut the hay.

Steve Fiske left the meeting.

Generator Project: The Town has received approval to change the location of the transfer switch. Bobbi will change the bid documents and send them to each board member to review. The bid dates will be set for later in the summer. Rich Phillips left the meeting.

Town Plan: The Board discussed their schedule. The hearing is tentatively scheduled for August 21st. The Board will review the plan and finalize it in July.

Tax Sale: Chris moved to hire Attorney Carolyn Greaves to conduct a tax sale, and to bid the minimum on behalf of the town for the Surridge and Robertson properties. Laurie second – all in favor.

Roads: The Town approved participation in the Resilient Rights of Way project at their last meeting. Rich Baker will take part, and he asked the Board for their authorization to advertise for the committee member-at-large.

Ballfield: Someone took down the scoreboard but the Board does not know who cut it down. The Scoreboard is in tough shape but it is leaning up against the dugout. Chris will follow up with the Recreation Department.

Trees: Lucy Blue contacted the Board about a dead tree on the side of the road. The tree is 21' from the center of the road. The Road Crew can take it down. The Board will check the survey to see if the town owns the property that the tree stands on. Bobbi notified the Board that she received a complaint about a lilac bush on at the bottom of Folsom Hill Road that blocks the view of oncoming traffic. Bobbi will ask the landowner to trim the lilac. Chris will check to see if the bush is in the right of way.

Ambulance: The Board executed a 1-year contract with East Montpelier Volunteer Fire Department for ambulance service.

Loan: The Board executed a promissory note to borrow \$110,000 at 2% interest from the Municipal Equipment Loan Fund, for the new loader.

Dates: The Selectboard rescheduled their July 3 meeting to 7:30 a.m.

Expenses, Permits & Payroll: Selectboard members read and signed reports for General Expenses and Payroll.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Bobbi Brimblecombe, Town Clerk

The foregoing is a true copy of the Minutes of the June 19, 2018\ Selectboard Meeting.
A True Record. Attest, _____, Town Clerk
